
Education Committee

ESSB 5267

Brief Description: Providing for the use of the school district capital projects funds for technology.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Eide, Brandland, Fairley and Kohl-Welles).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Expands authorized uses of school district capital projects funds to include ongoing fees for on-line applications and licensing of software, upgrades and incidental services, and ongoing training related to installation and integration of technology.
- Requires districts to transfer capital projects funds to the district general fund when using the funds for this purpose, and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop accounting guidelines for the transfers.

Hearing Date: 3/15/07

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

School districts must establish a general fund for maintenance and operations of the district and a capital projects fund for major capital projects. Proceeds from bond sales, capital fund investments, and excess levies for construction, modernization or remodeling of school facilities (capital levies) are deposited in the capital projects fund. Monies in the capital projects fund can be used for specified purposes, including major renovation, energy capital improvements, and major items of equipment and furniture (except vehicles). Since 2002, capital project funds may also be used for the costs of implementing technology systems, facilities, and projects; acquiring hardware, licensing software, and online applications; and training related to technology installation.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Some school districts propose technology levies to their voters. Technology levies are really capital levies that the school district proposes to use for technology as allowed by the law. Under the State Constitution and statute, capital levies may be authorized for up to six years. There is no levy lid for capital levies.

School districts pay for other technology costs from their general maintenance and operations fund with funds coming from state allocations for nonemployee-related costs (NERC) and any local maintenance and operations levies. School districts that do not have capital levies may be relying on maintenance and operating funds for all technology-related purchases

Summary of Bill:

The authorized uses of school district capital projects funds for technology are expanded to include ongoing fees for on-line applications and licensing of software, including paying for upgrades and incidental services. Capital project funds can also be used for ongoing training related to installation and integration of technology.

A school district using capital projects funds for the expanded purposes must transfer the funds to the district's general fund. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must adopt accounting and budgeting guidelines for these transfers that minimize administration impact but provide budget comparability.

The limitations of current law that prevent a district from authorizing more than one maintenance and operations levy during the same time period do not apply to capital levies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.